

# Regional Transportation Operations Collaboration and Coordination

21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY OPERATIONS USING 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES

## THE REGIONAL OPERATIONS POSSIBILITIES

Consider the possibilities for 21<sup>st</sup> century travel that is safe, reliable, and secure...

- Response times and decisionmaking during incidents and emergencies are improved as public safety officials and transportation officials reduce delay through effective coordination and communication.
- Road users hear reliable, timely, and relevant news about weather, work zones, and traffic situations thanks to a regional traveler information service that delivers information across jurisdictions, agencies, and modes.
- Hazardous materials moving through an urban area are electronically identified, monitored, tracked, and coordinated by regional traffic management and public safety agencies to ensure safe, secure, and efficient intermodal movement.

## WHAT CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

These visions of 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation are possible when day-to-day operations managers work together to solve shared problems, improve system performance, and communicate successfully through deliberate collaboration and coordination. The result is the creation of key relationships among regional agencies and jurisdictions responsible for delivering transportation and public safety services in a metropolitan area. These key players include:

- Traffic operations managers
- Transit operations managers
- Police and fire officials
- Emergency response managers
- Port authority managers
- Planners
- Private sector representatives such as ports, gateway operators, and traffic reporting media

Relationships formed by these professionals lay the foundation for effective regional transportation systems and services using 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies. The goal is cooperation in

all situations under a range of conditions and with other related systems, for our customers—those who depend on the regional transportation system.

As envisioned, regional transportation operations collaborations and coordination is a deliberate, continuous, and sustained activity that takes place when transportation agency managers and officials responsible for day-to-day operations work together at a regional level to solve operational problems, improve system performance, and communicate better with one another. The safe, reliable, and secure operation of our Nation's transportation systems depends on continuous and sustained collaboration and coordination across traditional jurisdictional and organizational boundaries.

The need for regional collaboration on transportation operations is most apparent in our metropolitan areas where numerous jurisdictions, agencies, and service providers are responsible for operating various aspects of the transportation system safely and efficiently. Many of these operations activities in a metropolitan region must cross both agency and jurisdictional boundaries to be successful. They may include:

- Traffic incident management
- Emergency management
- Communications networks
- Traveler information services
- Weather events
- Electronic payment services

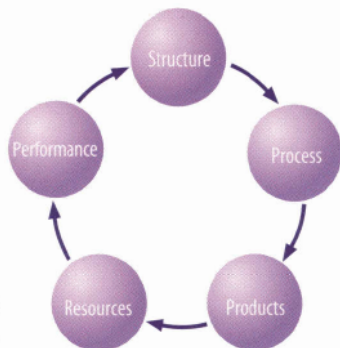
Regional transportation operations collaboration and coordination are beneficial, especially in any metropolitan region confronting the pressures of managing transportation systems in the face of growth in demand, congestion, incidents and emergencies, adverse weather, and customer service requirements. However, to effectively collaborate and coordinate, regional transportation managers must agree on how regional activities should be operated over time, how to plan for and achieve better regional operations, and how to use available resources to achieve desired expectations in operating performance.



## WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

The five key elements associated with successful regional operations collaboration and coordination activity are:

- Structure
- Process
- Products
- Resources
- Performance measures that gauge success



Using these five elements as a framework, managers with day-to-day responsibilities for providing transportation and public safety services can build sustained relationships and create strategies to improve transportation system performance. The intent of the framework is to institutionalize working together as a way of doing business among transportation agencies, public safety officials, and other public and private sector interests within a metropolitan region. The framework is important to overcoming institutional barriers found in most regions that make collaboration difficult. These barriers include resource constraints, internal stovepipes in large agencies, and the often-narrow jurisdictional perspective of governing boards.

## FUTURE DIRECTION

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Operations is committed to raising awareness, motivating action, and helping guide the evolution of collaboration and coordination among transportation operations at the regional level. Working with the FHWA Office of Planning, a three-track set of initiatives is being carried out that includes 1) awareness and outreach, 2) development and delivery, and 3) articulating best practices. A Primer on Regional Transportation Operations Collaboration and Coordination has been prepared as a first step. Other guidance is planned to help create needed linkages between operations and planning.

The material in the Primer will be the basis for a training course and awareness seminar. Demonstration projects are being planned that will help support and showcase the range of ways that operations collaboration and coordination can occur. In addition, a national campaign is underway with national associations to raise awareness and help motivate action with a broad set of stakeholders and interest groups.

### Examples of Transforming Regional Transportation Operation

TRANSCOM is a coalition of 18 transportation and public safety agencies intended to serve as a forum to collectively address traffic, incident management, and construction issues in the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut metropolitan region.

CapWIN, an integrated transportation and criminal justice information wireless network, is a concept currently being developed as a result of the need for improved coordination and information sharing among public safety and transportation agencies in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C.